

an arc groove provided in the operation lever and centered around the rotational operation center, and

a stopper pin fixed to the bracket and inserted into the arc groove, and

the arc groove and the stopper pin prescribe an allowable rotational range of the operation lever rotatably operated by the operation pedal, wherein

the operation lever is rotatably operated by the first pedal, and

the first connecting portion is the rotational operation center of the operation lever.

REMARKS

Claim 1 was rejected under § 112, second paragraph because the written description of the invention, with respect to the parallel link mechanism, did not conform to the invention as recited in claim 1, thereby rendering claim 1 indefinite. Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite that a connection parallel link mechanism has a first connecting portion and a second connecting portion attached to the bracket. The first parallel link mechanism is rotatably attached to the bracket via the first connecting portion, and the second parallel link mechanism is rotatably attached to the bracket via the second connecting portion. The second parallel link mechanism is connected to the first parallel link mechanism by the connection parallel link mechanism. The written description of the invention reflects this aspect of the invention, as now recited in claim 1, rendering moot the § 112 rejection, so the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 1 was rejected under § 102(e) over McFarlane '625. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. As recited in claim 1, a connection parallel link mechanism having first and second connecting portions is attached to a bracket, a first parallel link

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mechanism is rotatably attached to the bracket via the first connecting portion, and a first pedal is attached to the bracket via the first parallel link mechanism. A second parallel link mechanism is rotatably attached to the bracket via the second connecting portion, a second pedal is attached to the bracket via the second parallel link mechanism. An adjustment mechanism is attached to the bracket, which prescribes the first and second parallel link mechanisms and the connection parallel link mechanism.

McFarlane '625 discloses a link mechanism A supporting a first pedal 18, a link mechanism B supporting a second pedal 16, and a control link 42 connecting the link mechanisms A and B. Link mechanism A includes links 122 and 126. McFarlane '625 does not disclose the structure or interconnection of the connection parallel link mechanism, the first and second connecting portions, first and second parallel link mechanisms, or the adjustment lever, as recited in claim 1, and at least for this reason, McFarlane '625 is not an anticipatory reference under § 102(e). Claim 1 therefore is patentable over McFarlane '625, and is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner stated that claims 3, 5, and 8-10 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form, including the features of the respective base claim and intervening claims, and if amended to overcome the § 112, second paragraph rejection of claim 1. Applicant has amended claims 3, 5, and 8, respectively, to be definite, and to be independent claims, including the features of amended claim 1, and the respective intervening claims. Per the Examiner's indication of allowability, applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 5 and 8-10 are now in condition for allowance.

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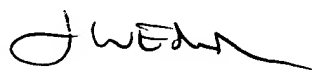
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application, and allowance of claims 1-10.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

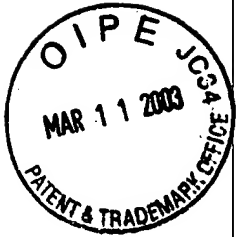
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
)
Sadao ITO et al.) Group Art Unit: 3682
)
Application No.: 09/924,478) Examiner: C. H. Kim
)
Filed: August 9, 2001)
)
For: PEDAL APPARATUS FOR)
AUTOMOBILE)

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

APPENDIX TO AMENDMENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A pedal apparatus for an automobile comprising:

a bracket fixed to a vehicle body,

a connection parallel link mechanism having a first connecting portion and

a second connecting portion attached to the bracket,

a first parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via [a] the
first connecting portion,

a first pedal attached to the bracket via the first parallel link mechanism,

a second parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via [a]

the second connecting portion, the second parallel link mechanism being connected to

the first parallel link mechanism by the connection parallel link mechanism,

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a second pedal attached to the bracket via the second parallel link mechanism, and

[a connection parallel link mechanism that connects the first parallel link mechanism and the second parallel link mechanism, and is provided with a pair of connection portions connecting the both parallel link mechanisms with the bracket, and]

an adjustment mechanism attached to the bracket, that prescribes the [forms of the] first parallel link mechanism, the second parallel link mechanism, and the connection parallel link mechanism.

3. (Amended) A pedal apparatus [according to claim 2] for an automobile comprising:

a bracket fixed to a vehicle body,

a connection parallel link mechanism having a first connecting portion and a second connecting portion attached to the bracket,

a first parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the first connecting portion,

a first pedal attached to the bracket via the first parallel link mechanism,

a second parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the second connecting portion, the second parallel link mechanism being connected to the first parallel link mechanism by the connection parallel link mechanism,

a second pedal attached to the bracket via the second parallel link mechanism, and

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an adjustment mechanism attached to the bracket, that prescribes the first parallel link mechanism, the second parallel link mechanism, and the connection parallel link mechanism, wherein

the first parallel link mechanism is provided with a first adjustment lever having a first end portion and a second end portion,

the first end portion of the first adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the bracket at the first connecting portion, and the second end portion of the first adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the first pedal,

the second parallel link mechanism is provided with a second adjustment lever having a first end portion and a second end portion,

the first end portion of the second adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the bracket at the second connecting portion, and the second end portion of the second adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the second pedal, and

the connection parallel link mechanism comprises:

a first arm rotating around the first connecting portion integrally with the first adjustment lever, a second arm rotating around the second connecting portion integrally with the second adjustment lever, and a connection link for connecting the first arm and the second arm, and wherein

the first parallel link mechanism further comprises a first operation lever that rotates around the first connecting portion as the rotational center [of] by operation of the first pedal and a first link that rotatably connects the first pedal and the first operation lever, respectively,

the second parallel link mechanism further comprises the second operation lever that rotates around the second connecting portion as the rotational center [of] by operation of the second pedal and a second link that rotatably connects the second pedal and the second operation lever, respectively.

5. (Amended) A pedal apparatus [according to claim 4,] for an automobile comprising:

a bracket fixed to a vehicle body,

a connection parallel link mechanism having a first connecting portion and a second connecting portion attached to the bracket,

a first parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the first connecting portion,

a first pedal attached to the bracket via the first parallel link mechanism,

a second parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the second connecting portion, the second parallel link mechanism being connected to the first parallel link mechanism by the connection parallel link mechanism,

a second pedal attached to the bracket via the second parallel link mechanism, and

an adjustment mechanism attached to the bracket, that prescribes the first parallel link mechanism, the second parallel link mechanism, and the connection parallel link mechanism, wherein

the first parallel link mechanism is provided with a first adjustment lever having a first end portion and a second end portion,

the first end portion of the first adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the bracket at the first connecting portion, and the second end portion of the first adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the first pedal,

the second parallel link mechanism is provided with a second adjustment lever having a first end portion and a second end portion,

the first end portion of the second adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the bracket at the second connecting portion, and the second end portion of the second adjustment lever is rotatably connected to the second pedal, and

the connection parallel link mechanism comprises:

a first arm rotating around the first connecting portion integrally with the first adjustment lever, a second arm rotating around the second connecting portion integrally with the second adjustment lever, and a connection link for connecting the first arm and the second arm, wherein

the adjustment mechanism prescribes each parallel link mechanism and the connection parallel link mechanism by rotating the first arm of the connection parallel link mechanism around the first connecting portion, and further wherein

the adjustment mechanism comprises:

a motor attached to the bracket,

a screw rod attached rotatably and unmovably in the axial direction to the bracket and rotated by driving of the motor[:],

a nut screwed onto the screw rod, and

a lever arm integrally formed with the first arm of the connection parallel link mechanism, which rotatably supports the nut.

8. (Amended) A pedal apparatus [according to claim 7] for an automobile
comprising:

- a bracket fixed to a vehicle body,
- a connection parallel link mechanism having a first connecting portion and
a second connecting portion attached to the bracket,
- a first parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the first
connecting portion,
- a first pedal attached to the bracket via the first parallel link mechanism,
- a second parallel link mechanism rotatably attached to the bracket via the
second connecting portion, the second parallel link mechanism being connected to the
first parallel link mechanism by the connection parallel link mechanism,
- a second pedal attached to the bracket via the second parallel link
mechanism, and
- an adjustment mechanism attached to the bracket, that prescribes the first
parallel link mechanism, the second parallel link mechanism, and the connection
parallel link mechanism, wherein
- one of the first pedal or the second pedal is an operation pedal, further
comprising:
- an operation lever that rotates around the rotational operation center in
accordance with operation of the operation pedal, and
- a prescribing portion that prescribes an allowable rotational range of the
operation lever, wherein

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the prescribing portion is provided with
an arc groove provided in the operation lever and centered around the
rotational operation center, and
a stopper pin fixed to the bracket and inserted into the arc groove, and
the arc groove and the stopper pin prescribe an allowable rotational range
of the operation lever rotatably operated by the operation pedal, wherein
the operation lever is rotatably operated by the first pedal, and
the first connecting portion is the rotational operation center of the operation
lever.